

Children Of Transgender Parents Deserve A Voice

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Last month, America watched athletic hero Bruce Jenner come out transgender. But most Americans have no concept of what transgender means. Others who watched Jenner's Diane Sawyer interview were family members whose lives have been affected by a transgender loved one. As I heard Jenner's story, I felt saddened, and remember the grief I went through when my father came out to me as transgender. After all, this is undoubtedly emotional for all involved.

As a nine-year-old, my identity was still forming when my father took me aside, just the two of us, and told me of his desire to become a woman. Suddenly, the idea of being a girl and growing up to be a woman and a mom blurred. What does it mean to be a woman, or a man?

I no longer felt free to embrace my identity as girl in our home. I felt rejected by my father. I was too embarrassed of my father and his impact on our family to talk about it with anyone—even to my best friend. Even so, I loved my dad and desperately wanted him to serve in the capacity of being a father.

So, this year, when I co-wrote a Supreme Court [amicus brief](#), it was not out of revenge for my lost childhood, but rather out of concern for other children who might endure childhoods like the one I experienced. It should not only be only the adults whose voices are heard. The children who come from untraditional homes should be equally important.

Children Cannot Advocate for Themselves

If children cannot have a safe environment, whom does our culture serve? One mother shared with me a time when her husband—who began transitioning to a woman—took their young children to the grocery store. When the four-year-old daughter called out to her daddy in the store, he sharply told her to call him aunty. The child was heartbroken and cried out, "I want my daddy." The angry parent hustled the crying child and her six-year-old brother out of the store to the car, and rushed home. The six-year-old remained quiet until they arrived. There, he told his mother what had happened, and said he never wanted to see his father again.

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Another situation was of a 16-year-old boy who shared the story of his father's transition into woman: "It feels like my dad put me out the curb with the trash." A boy needs a dad who is more than a provider and a disciplinarian. He needs a dad who is willing to connect with him on an intimate level, socially, and who teaches him by example. He needs a dad who will build into his life the tools he needs for healthy character development.

On the flip side, we hear of women having breasts removed, having unnecessary hysterectomies, and taking male hormones to build muscles and grow beards. Imagine how, as a child, you would have struggled as you tried to process seeing Aunt Tina as a woman last year, and then, when she returns for a visit this year, understanding how to respond to Uncle Tim with a full beard. Let us not forget the "pregnant man" the media covered and applauded, though in reality a man is unable to become pregnant.

Children Deserve a Voice and an Identity

Children like me who grew up in painfully untraditional homes are not allowed the freedom to voice their true feelings in a society ruled by political correctness and the LGBT agenda. Most of us don't even recognize what our circumstances cost us until we are adults, and in some situations not until one or both living parents are no longer

with us. At that point we might comprehend it all and finally be able to express what our lost childhoods have done to the remainder of our lives.

Children don't want to hurt their parent(s), so that caution often prevents speaking freely. But, in due time, they will find their voice. When they do, will their rights to freedom of speech be protected? Will their protests be silenced by those who enforce political correctness?

If the Supreme Court opens the door to gay marriages nationally, it will force open doors to policies, including those that promote transgenderism. None of these policies are based on the well-being of children.

Children grow up looking for their identity. More specifically, little children establish their identity through their relationships with their parents, and through how their parents reflect masculinity and femininity. Please, America, children's needs must take priority over a special-interest group.